

Chapter 2

The Impact of Management and Leadership Roles in Building Competitive Healthcare Units

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ABSTRACT

This chapter discusses the leadership features that support the creation of an innovative culture of the organization, with particular emphasis on the attributes that are essential to building a competitive advantage in the medical services market. According to the concept of new management, managers are the initiators of change and development within the healthcare facility where they work. They require professionalism and a high level of competence which allows them to create and implement creative management solutions. Thus, the influence of management and the role of the leader in building competitive health care units is undisputed. Due to the specific nature of health care facilities, the ability to build trust, as well as the clear and precise communication of plans and visions, is gaining importance, in addition to knowledge and experience.

INTRODUCTION

The key challenge facing health care leaders is to implement policies and procedures to improve the functioning of the unit and to ensure competitiveness in the healthcare market. The responsibility that managers take to plan, direct and coordinate medical services requires knowledge, experience and commitment. This is not an easy task as emerging health care and growing competition in the medical services market pose new challenges. Healthcare management is an exciting and rapidly growing area of health care. There is a continuing need for professionally trained health care managers. It is important that the manager is competent and able to achieve the target goal, such as safe and high quality patient care. The

DOI: 10.4018/978-1-5225-3946-9.ch002

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quality and safety of a healthcare facility depends on many factors (Brasaite, Kaunonen, Martinkenas, Mockiene, Suominen, 2016). The most important are:

- A culture that promotes security excellence
- Planning and providing services that meet the needs of patients
- Availability of human, financial, physical and information resources – to provide care
- Sufficient staff and other service providers
- Current rating among healthcare facilities and improvement of results

The healthcare management area is open and increasingly diverse. The manager's role is to coordinate all aspects of the healthcare facility to ensure smooth functioning. The medical field includes not only patient contact, but also co-operation with insurance companies, accounting procedures, information systems management for the introduction and monitoring of patient records and expensive medical equipment, and the management and motivation of staff. Since a healthcare facility is a company, all of this must be achieved in a cost-effective and safe way for the patient. This requires the ability to coordinate, motivate and organize work to make the right decisions. The medical team must be in sync and well-coordinated, so that the medical care will provide high standards of medical services. No doubt, management is needed to support and coordinate services provided within a healthcare unit. Understanding the role of leaders and their impact on organizational effectiveness requires knowledge of the strategy and organizational culture of the work environment in which the members of the organization can make the right decisions (Ferlie & Shortell, 2001). A number of researchers have identified strategies and factors that work well for organizations, including health care. These include:

- Consistent leadership with common goals;
- Supporting a culture of organization;
- Employee involvement;
- Team development in the work environment;
- Patient- response strategy - high quality care and patient safety;
- Strategies to improve patient involvement in the treatment process.

The role of a leader in building and sustaining high quality care and competing health care units requires careful analysis. Applying strategies, compromises and making key decisions leads to success. Shared goals and coordinated action in health care settings are key to improving quality, safety, and the building of competitive health care facilities (Huczynski & Buchanan, 2007).

Significance of Management Competencies in the Health Services Sector

The necessity of having highly competent health care staff is due to the variability of the sector, where, with decreasing financial expenditures, management is required to increase the efficiency of healthcare facilities management while minimizing costs. Under such conditions, making rational decisions that result in efficient and effective management is a must in building competitive health care units. Managers of health care have the right and moral responsibility to ensure the safety and quality of health services provided. Forming and effectively executing missions, building visions and organizational strategies, shaping the positive image of organizations in the external environment (Oleksyn 2006) and psychoso-

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